

PSYCHIATRISTS ARE DOCTORS TOO (REVISITED)

DEAR EDITOR:

Dr. Chowallur Dev Chacko wrote that “when a psychiatrist oversteps his bounds and orders complicated medical tests, he is exposing himself to unnecessary liability” [Letter to the Editor. *Psychiatry* 2005;2005;2(3):20]. I can appreciate his concern, but Dr. Epstein raises a good point—what exactly constitutes a “complicated medical test?” Is it appropriate to order an EKG for someone who has a syncopal episode and is on a QT-prolonging medication? Is it appropriate to order a CT scan to confirm your suspicion of normal pressure hydrocephalus? Or are these tests too complicated? There are many medical conditions that masquerade themselves as psychiatric illnesses and visa versa. Psychiatrists should not be afraid of doing what is right for the patient, even if it involves ordering tests they may not feel comfortable interpreting. As a physician, you are part of a larger community and should take advantage of these opportunities to learn from your colleagues as well as your patients.

With regards,
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